A SERMON,
No lesse Fruitefull, then Famous.

E. 15. 53

Preached at Pauls Crosse on the Sunday of *Quinquagesima*, by *R. Wimbledon*, in the Reigne of King *Henry* the fourth, in the yeere of our Lord God, 1388. and found out hid in a Wall.

Which Sermon is heere set foorth by the old Copy, without adding or diminishing, saue the olde English heere and there amended.

BIBL. CANT. 10

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To the Christian Reader.

Loe, Christian Reader, while the worlde not slumbred, but routed and snorted in the deepe and dead sleep of ignorance; some liuely spirits were waking, and ceassed not to call vppon the drowsie multitude of men, and to stirre them vp from the long dreames of sinfull liuing, that once at the last they would creepe out of darkenesse, and come forth to the hot shining Sunne of Gods word, that both the filthy mists of their harts might be driuen away, and also their heauy and dying spirits recreated, refreshed, and quickened. So that no man can alleadge, that in any age there wanted Preachers of Gods word. For he that keepeth Israel sleepeth not, nor slumbreth. And though through his secret counsell, hee sendeth more Labourers into his harnest at one time then at another: yet hee hath euer some to weede, to reape, to gather sheaues together into the barnes

of euerlasting life. Reade therefore diligently this little Sermon, so long since written, & thou shalt perceiue the same quicke spirit in the Author thereof, that thou now maruailest at in others of our time. He sharply, earnestly, and wittily rebuketh the sinnes of all sorts of men, and speaketh as one hauing authority, & not as the Scribes and Pharisies, which with their leaden and blunt dart, could neuer touch the quicke, though they haue occupied and worne the Pulpets for many yeares. The word of God is liuely and mighty in operation, & sharper then any two edged sword, and cutteth euen vnto the diuision of the soule, and of the spirit, and of the ioyntures & marrow, &c. Wherefore, eftsoone I exhort thee, to reade this little Treatise diligently, and not onely to reuerence the authority and liuely spirit, and word of God therein: but also to learne both to acknowledge, and moreouer to amend the wickednesse of thy life, which God grant for his Christs sake. Amen.

A

Godly and Famous Sermon, preached in the yeere of our Lord, 1388. at *Paules* Crosse, on the Sunday of *Quinquagesima*, by *R. Wimbledon*, and found out hid in a Wall.

Luke 16.2.

Redde rationem villicationis tuæ.

Come, giue a reckoning of thy Bayliwicke.

CHRIST, the Author and Doctour of all Trueth, in his Gospel, likeneth the kingdome of Heauen, to an houlholder, saying on this wise: Like is the kingdome of heauen to an housholding man, that went forth first in the Morning to hyre workmen into his Vineyard; so did he about the third houre, the sixt, the ninth, and the eleuenth. And as he found men standing idle, he said to them; Why stand yee here vnoccupied? Go ye into my Vineyard, and that that is due I shall giue to you. Math.20.

you. And when the day was ended, he called his Steward, & bad that he should giue euery man a penny.

Spiritually, this householder is our Master and Lord Christ, the true householder and head of his Church here in earth: which calleth men in diuers houres of the day, that is, in diuers ages of the world. As in the time of nature, he called by inspiration, Abel, Enoch, Noah, Abraham, and other like. In the time of the old Law, he called Moses, Dauid, Esay, and Ieremy, with the Prophets. And in the time of grace, hee called the Apostles, Martyrs Confessours, & Virgins. He called also some in Childe-hood, as Iohn Baptist: some in their youth, as Iohn the Euangelist: some in their middle age, as Peter and Andrew: some in their latter daies, as Gamaliel, and Ioseph of Aramathea. And all these be called to labour in the Lords Vineyard, that is, his Church, yea, and that sundry waies. For right as ye see, that in trimming of this materiall Vine, there be diuers labourers: for some cut away the branches that be wolde, some vnderset and

lay

lay abroad the Vine, yea, some pare away the olde earth, and lay new vnto the rote; which Offices bee all so necessary to the Vine, that if any of them faile or want, it must either bee cutte, or it will destroy the growing of the Vine. For vnlesse the Vine bee cutte, shee will ware wilde, except shee bee railed vp, and laide abroad, weedes and Nettles will some ouergrow her. And if the rote bee not fatted with new and fresh dung, for feblenesse she will ware barren. No lesse needfull in Christs Church, bee these three Offices, of Priesthood, Knighthood, and Labourers.

The Priests or Preachers, it behoueth to cut away the voide branches of sinne, with the sword of Gods word. To Knighthoode it becommeth, not to let wrongs and thefts to bee done, and to maintaine Gods Law, and them that be Teachers thereof: yea, and to keepe the Land from insurrection, and inuading of others Lands. The Labourers must labour bodily, and with sore sweate get out of the earth bodily sustenance, both for themselues and for other. And

all these estates bee so needfull vnto the Church, that none may well bee without other. For if Priests wanted, the people for default of knowledge of Gods word, would ware wilde in vices, and so die ghostly. And were not Knighthod, and men to rule the people by Law and hardinesse, theeues and enemies would so encrease, that no man could liue in peace. And but for Labourers, both Priests and Knights must become Artificers, Plowmen, and Heards: or else must for default of bodily sustenance die.

Auicenna. And therefore saith the great Clearke Auicenna: that the very vnreasonable beast, if it haue that that nature and kind hath ordained for it, as kinde giueth it, he is sufficient to liue of himselfe, without any helpe of any other of the same kinde: As if there were but one hore, or one sheepe in the world, yet if hee had Corne and Grasse, as Nature and kind hath ordained for such a Beast, hee should liue well enough. But if there were but one man in the world, although hee had all the goods that is therein: yet for want of other he should die, or his life would bee

Comparatio.

worse

worse then if he were not. And the case is this: For thing that kinde hath ordained for mans sustenance, without other preparing or altering, then it hath of kinde, accordeth not to him. As if a man haue Corne, as it commeth from the earth: yet it is no meate fit for him, vntill it bee by mans craft changed into Bread. And though hee haue Flesh or Fish, yet while it is rawe, and not by mans labour sodden, roasted, broyled, or baked, it is not fitte for mans sustenance. Euen so the wooll that the Sheepe beareth, must needes by diuers craftes bee altered or changed, ere it be able to cloathe any man. And truely one man by himselfe should neuer doe all these labours, and therefore saith this Clearke, that it is needfull that some bee Husbandmen, some men of Occupations, some Merchants to fetch that which one Land wanteth, from another, where it is plentifull.

And truely, this one thing should bee a very great cause, why euery State should loue other, and men of one craft should neither hate nor despise men of another craft.

craft. For one of them is so needfull vnto another, that oftentimes those crafts that seeme most dishonest, might worst be forborne. And this I dare say, that he that is not labouring in this world, either in studying, praying, and preaching, as it behoueth Clergy men, for the health of the people: Or in defending the causes of the needy, in fighting against tyrants and enemies, which is the Office of all Knights: Or in labouring on the earth, as in diuers crafts, which pertaine to the Labourers; when the date of reckoning shall come, that is, the ende of this life, right as hee liued heere without labour or trauaile, so shall he want there the reward of the penny, that is, the endlesse ioyes of Heauen. And as he was liuing heere after no state nor order, so shall he then bee put into that place where is no order, but euerlasting horrour and sorrow, that is in hell.

Iob 10.

Wherefore, let euery man see to what state God hath called him, and liue therein by labour, according vnto his degree. They that be labouring men, or craftesmen, doe it truely. If thou be a seruant,

1 Cor. 7.

1 Pet. 3.

or

or a bondman, be subiect, and liue in feare to displease thy Master or Lord for Christ his sake. If thou be a Merchant, deceiue not thy brother in chaffering. If thou bée a Knight or a Lord, defend the poore and needy man, from such as would harme him. Thou being a Iudge or a Iustice, goe not to the right hand for fauour, nor to the left hand to punnish any man for hate. Thou that art a Priest instruct, praise, and reproue. Instruct the ignorant, praise the obedient, and reproue the disobedient to God. Thus euery man ought to labour and trauaile after his degrée: for when the Euening commeth, that is, the end of the world, then shall euery man take reward good or bad, thereafter as he hath laboured héere.

1 Thess. 4.

Prouerb. 8

2 Tim. 4.

These bée the words that I haue taken to entreate upon, and bée thus much to say in English: Come and giue a reckoning of thy Bayliwicke. Christ the author of pitty, and louer of the saluation of his people, in the processe of this Gospel, enformeth euery man which is his Baliffe, by the Parable of a Baliffe that hée speaketh off, to prepare him-

Note.

himselfe to make his answer, and to giue a reckoning of such goods, as hee hath receiued at GOD'S hand, when the day of strickt reckoning shall come, that is, the day of doome. And so I at this time, through the helpe of God, following him that is so great a Master of authority, because I know nothing that should more draw away mans vnreasonable loue from the vaine and transitory ioy of this world, then to haue in minde the fearefull reckoning: So farre as GOD permitteth, I will shew you how you shall dispose you to auoide the Lords yre and vengeance when there shall bee so hard a iudgement, that wee shall giue account for euery idle word that wee haue spoken. For then it shall be said vnto vs, as we shall haue no power to goe backe: Come, giue a reckoning of thy Baylywicke.

But for further proceſſe of this first part of this Sermon, know that there bee three Baylywickes, that shall bee called vnto this strickt reckoning. The first shall answer for himselfe and for others, and they be Clergy men, that haue the ouerſight

uerſight or cure of mans ſoule. The ſecond, be temporall Lords, that haue the gouernance of the people. And the third Bayliffe ſhall giue account for himſelfe, or at leaſt haue much leſſe charge then the other, and that is euery Chriſtian man, for that he hath receiued of God. And euery one of theſe ſhall anſwer to three queſtions. Three queſtions.

The firſt queſtion is: How haſt thou entred? The ſecond: How haſt thou ruled? The third: How haſt thou liued? And if thou canſt aſſoile theſe three queſtions, and diſcharge thee of them: there was neuer earthly Lord (without compariſion) that ſo rewarded his ſeruants, as the Lord will reward thee, that is to ſay, with life and ioy euerlaſting. But on the other ſide, if thou now, regarding not thine owne wealth, take no heede of this reckoning, if that day take thee ſuddenly, ſo that thou paſſe hence in deadly ſinne and euill life, and haue not amended (as thou knoweſt not what ſhall befall thee,) all the tongues that euer were, or euer ſhall bee, cannot expreſſe the ſorrow and woe that thou ſhalt euer The firſt. Second. Third.

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be in and ſuffer. Therefore the deſire of ſo great ioy, & the feare of ſo great paine, (though the loue of GOD were not in thine heart) ſhould make thee afraide to ſinne, for to thinke that thou ſhalt giue a reckoning of thy Bayliwicke. Therefore as I ſaide, the firſt Queſtion that ſhall be propounded to the firſt Bayliffe, which is a Prelate or Curate of mens ſoules, is thus: How haſt thou entred? Friend, how entredſt thou hither? Who brought thee into this Office? Trueth, or Simony? God, or the Diuell? Grace, or Money? The fleſh, or the Spirite? Giue now thy reckoning if thou canſt: if thou canſt not, I counſell thee without delay to learne. For if thou bee called thus, or it be to night, & then if thou ſtand dumbe for lacke of knowledge, and for confuſion of thine owne conſcience, thou ſhalt fall into the ſentence that heere enſueth: Binde his hands and feete, and caſt him into vtter darkneſſe, where is wayling and gnaſhing of teeth. Therefore I counſell thee that thou aduiſe thee well, how thou ſhalt anſwer to this queſtion. How haſt thou entred? Whether by cal-

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ling, or by thine owne procuring: for that thou wouldst labour in Gods Gospel, or for that thou wouldst bee richly attyred, and liue easily? Answer to thine owne conscience now, as thou shalt (ere it bee long) answer to God. Thou that hast taken now the order of Priesthood, whether thou be a Curate or no, who stirred thee to take so high an Office vpon thee? Whether because thou wouldst liue as a Priest ought to doe, and study Gods Law to preach, and most heartily to pray for the people? Or for to liue a delicious life vpon other mens sweat, and thy selfe to labour neuer a whit?

And heere might I aske a Question: Why do men set their Children or Cozins to schoole? Whether for to get them great aduancements, or to make them the better to know GOD, and to serue him? This their intention men may see openly, by the Sciences they set them to. Why, I pray you, doe men put their sonnes to the Ciuill Law, or to the Kings Court to write Letters and Writtes, rather then to Philosophy or Diuinity, but because they thinke that these Sciences

Question.

Solution.

ences shal be meanes to make them great men in the worlde? And why bee there so few put to learne the worde of God, and to be Preachers thereof, but that there are not such gaines as is in the other? And so care they little on both partes for godly liuing.

Question.

Solution.

But certaine true it is now, that Iohn Chrysostome saith: Parents bee louing to the bodies of their Children, but they re soules they care not for: they desire their welfare in this worlde, but they passe not what they shall suffer in another. Some ordaine great fees for them here, but none ordaine them to Godward. The losse of their bodies they will sore bewaile, but the health of their Soules they make no reckoning of. If they see them poore and sicke, they sorrow and sigh: but though they see them sinne, they are nothing at al greeued. And heereby they shew that they brought forth their bodies, but not their soules.

Iohannes Chrysost. hom. 27.

And now to speake againe of Priests, if we do take heed truely, we shall perceiue very great abhominations that be scattered in the Church now adayes amongst Priests:

Priests: we shall well perceiue, I say, that they come not all into Christs folde by Christs calling, for to profite, but by other wayes to get them worldly wealth. And this is the cause of losing of soules, that Christ bought so deare, and of many errors among the people. And therefore it is written in the boke of mourning, where ỹ Prophet speaketh thus to God: The enemy hath put his hand vnto all things to him desirable, for hee hath let lawlesse folke enter into the Sanctuary, of ỹ which thou hadst commanded that they should not enter into thy Church.

The enemy is Sathanas, as his name soundeth, that hath put his hand vnto all that him liketh. For what sinne might the Fiend by all his craft or engine haue sowne among men, that is not now adaies vsed? In what plenty is pride, enuy, wrath, & couetousnesse? When were they so great as they be now, and so of all other sinnes? And wherefore thinkest thou? But for because there be lawlesse people entred into the Temple, that neyther in themselues kéep the Law of God, nor can teach other. And to all such saith God by the Prophet Ose: For that thou Ose 4.

hast put away cunning or knowledge of Gods will, I will put thée away, that thou shalt vse no Priesthood to me.

Note, that God and holy Scripture, expressly heere forbiddeth men to take the state of Priesthood on them, vnlesse they haue knowledge as behoueth them.

Thou then that canst neither rule thy selfe nor others, after the law of God: beware how thou wilt answer, for God at this dreadfull dome, shall say vnto thée: Come and giue a reckoning of thy Bayliwicke, how thou hast entred.

The second question that euery Prelate or Curate must answer to, is this: How hast thou ruled? That is to say, the soules of the Subiects, and the goodes of poore men? Giue now thy account. First, how hast thou gouerned Gods flocke committed to thy Cure? Whether art thou an Heard, or an hyred man, that doth all for his bodily hire? As a father, or as a wolfe, that eateth the sheepe, & kéepeth them not? Say on: Whom hast thou turned from their cursed liuing, by thy deuout preaching & good example? Whom hast thou taught the Law of God, that was before ignorant? There shall héeheard

heard a grieuous accusing of fatherlesse children, and a streight alleadging of all the flocke, that thou hast taken of them thy liuing, through their labour & sweate, and done nothing therefore, but let them goe astray, wandring for pasture and water, and none giuen them by thée.

Directly giue thy reckoning also, how hast thou ruled and spent the goods of poore men? How shalt thou tremble with horrible feare then, thinkest thou? Heare what Saint Bernard saieth, threatening Clearkes and Ministers of the Church: They bée in the place of Saints, saieth he, and they doe wickedly, in that they not holding them content with wages that are sufficient to their necessaries, but the ouerplus that the néedy should bée sustained by, they bée not ashamed to waste in the houses of their pride and lechery, with holding to themselues wickedly and cursedly, that which should be the liuings of poore men; with double wickednesse, truely they doe sinne. First, they do sinne, in that they rob other men of their goods. Furthermore, for that they misuse holy things in their vanities, and in their wickednesse. Euery *Bernardus.*

such Bayliffe therefore beware, for anon to the laſt farthing thou ſhalt reckon and giue account. Thinkeſt thou then that thou ſhalt not be diſallowed of God, for that that thou miſpent? In bringing vp of young idle fellowes, nourliſhed and taught, as it were in a Schoole to blaſpheme God in all manner of pointes of euill liuing, and feeding of fat Palfries, of Hounds, and of Hawkes, and (if ſo be, that is worſt of all) on laſciuious women, heare what is ſaide of ſuch: They haue ledde their daies in vanity, and in wealth, and in a moment they bee gone downe into hell. Thinke therefore I reade thee, that thou ſhalt render ſtraightly the account of thy Bayliwicke.

The third queſtion that this Bayliffe ſhall anſwer to, is this: How haſt thou liued? What light of holineſſe haſt thou giuen and ſhewed vnto the people in thy liuing? What myrrour haſt thou beene vnto them? Now giue thy reckoning, how haſt thou liued? As a good Shepheard going before his flocke with good examples, or as a lewd perſon? As a man, or a beaſt? It is a wonder truely to ſee how the life of Prieſts is changed.

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They bee cloathed like Lords & Knights, they speake as vnhonestly as any rybauld or Harlotte: as couetously for gaines doe they procure, as any Merchants. They ride like Princes, and all this that thus is spent, is of poore mens goods & Christs heritage. Therefore saith an holy Doctor, The clay of Egypt is tough and stinking, and mingled with blood: The States were hard to be vndone, for they were baked with the fire of couetousnesse, and with the laire or earth of lusts. In this point rich men trauaile, and in this watch they, lying in waite for poore men. In these trauaile Prelates that be blinded with too much shining of riches, that make them houses like Churches in greatnesse, and superfluous aboundance of all things: that with diuers paintings colour their chambers, and with diuers silkes & cloathings of colours, make their Images gay: but the poore man for want of cloathes beggeth, and with an empty belly doeth cry at the doore. And shall I say sothe, saith this Doctor? Oft-times thus poore men bee robbed for to cloathe stocks and stones. Of such speaketh the Prophet Esay: Note.

Quid tu hic? Aut quasi quid hic?

Esay: Who art thou here? Or as who art thou here? Here then art thou occupying the place of Peter, of Paul, of Thomas, or of Martin, but how? As Iudas was among the Apostles, as Simon Magus among the Disciples, as a Candle newly quenched, that fumeth ouer all the house, instead of a light Lanthorne, and as a smoake that blindeth mens eyes instead of a cleare fire. If then contrary thus the manner of liuing, that Christ and his Disciples left to Priests, heare what the Prophet Ieremy saieth: They haue entred, and they haue had, and they haue not bene obedient: they haue with false title, or with their false corrupt intention, had powre mens goods to their misusing, and they haue not bene obedient to the Law of God in their owne liuing. Therefore it is written, That they shall haue the hardest dome. A hard dome or iudgement, for that they haue misentred: a harder iudgement, for that they haue misruled: the hardest iudgement, for because they haue so cursedly liued beyond all other. Wherefore, I counsell thee betimes, thinke how thou wilt make thy reckoning.

Sapi. 6.

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The second Bayliffe that must answer for himselfe and for other is hee that hath the rule of any Realme, Prouince, Shire, or Countries: as Kinges, Princes, Maiors, Shiriffes, and Iustices, and these shall answer to the same three questions. The first, How hast thou entred into thy Office? Whether to profite the people, to destroy falsehod, and further trueth: or for desire to obtaine thereby worldly worship and riches? If thou take such an office more for thine owne worldly profite, then for to helpe the Commonwealth, thou art none of the perfect members of the Church, but art a tyrant, and it is to bee feared, lest there bee many that desire such estate. Some, that they may be enhaunced with riches, and some that they might the rather oppresse such as they hate, and some be enhaunced in taking gifts: whereby they spare to punnish those that haue trespassed, & so make them partners of their sinnes, and for bribes they worke all things. And many such, when they be so high in Office, thinke not that they bee poore mens Sonnes, Brethren, and Seruants: but thinke themselues to bee of a higher kinde

of nature, as they bee aduanced to worldly honour, which is but winde and vanity. Of whom saith GOD by the Prophet, They haue reigned, but not by me: They haue beene Princes, but I know them not. So was Roboam King Salomons Sonne, when hee was first King, aduanced in his heart, when the people of Israel came to him and saide: Thy Father in his last daies, put vppon vs a great charge, wee desire thee that thou wouldst make it lighter, and wee will serue thee. The King asked counsell of the Elder wise men, which aduised him to answer them faire, and that should be best. But he forsoke these wise mens counsels, and did after children that were his play-fellowes, and saide vnto the people, when they came againe: My least finger is bigger then my Fathers ridge-bone: My Father greeued you somewhat, but I will adde more thereto. The people hearing this, rebelled against him, and toke them another King: and since that time, came neuer the Kingdome whole againe.

Wherefore, it is good for Rulers to take sober counsell, and to eschew eare-

rounders,

rounders, and alwaies to haue an eye of loue to the Commons that they rule. For know they well bee they neuer so high, ỹ they shall come before a higher Iudge, to giue a reckoning.

The second Question is: How hast thou ruled the people and the Offices that thou hadst to gouerne? Thou that hast béene a Iudge in causes of poore men, how hast thou kept this Commandement of God, that thou shalt not take héede to the person of the poore man, to be the harder to him for his pouerty: nor thou shalt not haue respect vnto the rich mans countenance, to spare or fauour him in wrong for his riches? O Lord, what abuse is there among Officers, of both Lawes now adaies? If a great man pleadeth with a poore man, to haue ought that hée holdeth; euery Officer shall be ready to further the rich man all that they may in his cause, that hee may haue the ende that he desireth. But if a poore man pleadeth with a rich man, then shall there be so many delaies, that though the poore mans right bée open to all the Countrey, for pure default of spending hée shall bée constrained to let his cause fall. Sherifes Deuter. 2.

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and Bayliffes will returne poore mens Writtes with a Tarde venit, except they feele money in their hands. And yet I heare say of men that haue prooued both Courts, that the Court that is called more spirituall Christian, is more cursed. Therefore it is truely saide: Giftes they take out of mens bosomes, to subuert the way of right iudgement. But in especiall, the woords of Christ are to bee feared, who saith, In what iudgement yee iudge other, your selfe shall receiue the same, when ye shal come to giue account of your Bayliwicke.

Math.7.

The third question is: How hast thou liued, thou that iudgest, and punishest other for trespalling? A great Doctor saith: It behoueth thee that punishest other men for their trespalles, to eschue and flee their vices. For if thy selfe do vnlawfully, iudging other, thou condemnest thy selfe, sith thou doest that thing which thou dislikest in others. Paul saith, Why teachest thou not thy selfe, that teachest other? Why stealest thou, that teachest other men not to steale? Saint Gregory saith; How shall that man take rule of other, that cannot goe before them in good liuing?

Roman.2.

ning? And when any man standeth before him in iudgement, he must take héed before what Iudge hée shall stand himselfe, to take his iudgment after his déeds. But it is to bee feared, that many fare as the two false Iudges, that would haue iudged to death the holy Susanna, for that she would not consent vnto their lustes. Of the which it is written, They turned away their eyes, for that they would not sée heauen, nor haue minde of right iudgement. And so it fortuneth oft, that they which are more worthy to be hanged, iudge them that be lesse worthy. As a Clearke telleth of Socrates the Philosopher, who on a time was demaunded why he did laugh? Because I sée (saide he) great théeues leaue little théeues to hanging. I pray you, whether is hée a greater Théefe that taketh away a mans House and his Land, from him and his Heires for euermore, or he that for great néede stealeth a Sheepe or a Calfe? And suppose yée that sometime wée haue not such Iudges, and men of Law that bée very extortioners & bribers themselues, and iudge other to death: But I aduise thée that thus iudgest other men, to remember

Susanna.

Socrates.

Valerius Maximus.

member that thou shalt come into iudgement, to giue a reckoning of thy Bayliwicke.

The third Bayliffe.

The third Bayliffe that shall be called to this dreadfull doome shall bee euery Christian man, that shall reckon to his Lord God for the goods that he hath had of his. And here I will speake but of the first Question, that is, how hast thou gouerned thee and thy goodes? And how hast thou entred heere to thy goods? Beware, yee that haue gotten any goodes wrongfully, eyther taking by extortion, by stealth, vsury, or deceit, woe shall bee to you at this dreadfull day. For as S. Austen saieth, if hee be cast into the fire, that hath not giuen of his owne goodes righteously gotten: where thinkest thou shall he bee cast, that hath stollen other mens goods? And if he shall burne with the Fiend, that hath not cloathed the naked, where iudgest thou shall hee burne, that hath made naked them that were cloathed? But as Saint Gregory saith: Two things make men thus to liue by rapine of other mens goods, that is, desire of honour, and dread of pouerty. And what vengeance falleth on this sinne of

Austine.

Moral. Greg 8.

couet-

couetousnesse, yee may see by a figure of Scripture. When the Angel said to the Prophet Zachary: Lift vp thine eyes and see what is that that goeth out. And the Prophet asked, what is that? Then the Angel said, This is the pot going out, that is, the eye of the earth. And there was a weight of Lead, and there was a Woman sitting in the middest of this pot, and the Angel said, This is impiety, and he toke her and cast her into the middle of the potte, and toke the Gobbet of Lead, and cast it into the pottes mouth. And the Prophet lift vp his eyes, and saw two Women like spirits in the ayre, with wings like vnto Kites or Puttockes: and they carried vp the Potte betweene heauen and earth. And the Prophet asked the Angel, whether they would carry this Pot? and he said, Into the Land of Shinar. This pot is couetousnesse, for as a pot hath a wide open mouth, so couetousnes gapeth euermore after worldly goods, riches, and honour. And as the liquor in the pot, profiteth not the pot it selfe, but them that draw and drinke thereof: so worldly goodes oft profite not the keeper, but other that come after, as it is written: Zachary 5. Exposition.

written; hee that hath money, shall haue
Eccles. 5. no fruite of it. And thus couetousnesse is
the eye of couetous men, for they be blinde
to see how they shauld come to heauen:
But to win worldly things they can see
many wayes like to the Owles & night-
Crowes, that see better by night then by
day. The peece of Lead, is the sinne of ob-
stinacy, the Woman sitting in the pot,
is impiety, as the Angel saith, that fol-
loweth vnrighteousnesse and auarice. A
man through auarice doth lose the pitty
that hee should haue of the misery of his
soule, sithence oftentimes men lose the
life of their soules by deadly sinne, that
they commit to get riches. And also they
lose the pitty that they should haue vnto
their bodies, putting themselues to many
great perils and ieopardies of their bodies
both by Sea and Land: and loseth com-
passion toward other men: and all this
doth couetousnesse. This pot is stopped
with the Gobbet of Lead, when impiety
is closed thus by the sinne of obstinacy,
by couetousnesse, that it may not goe out
of the keepers heart by repentance: For
Iohn 20. as Iob saith, when hee is filled hee shall
be stopped. The two Women that bare

vp

vp the Pot, were pride and lust of flesh, that in the Scripture bée called the two daughters of the water-Leach, crying: Bring, bring; and they had wings. The first woman, which is pride, haode two wings, the first wing is graces or giftes spirituall, as cunning, wisedome, counsell, and such other, of which gifts, men are oft proud. The second wing is bodily grace or gifts, as strength, beauty, ancestry, with such other, of which also men were often proud.

The wing of the second Woman, is fleshly desires, and they bée gluttony and sloth. Of gluttony speaketh S. Gregory, saying: When the belly is filled, the desire of lustes is stirred. Of sloth saith Saint Augustine, that Lot while hée was in businesse dwelling amongst the shrewes in Sodome, he was a good man: but when hée was on the hill, idle, in drunkennesse he lay by his owne daughters. And these Women had wings like Gleides or Buttocks, that with crying voyce goe seeking their meate, as Bartholomeus saith: Thus fareth the couetousnesse and feruent desire of fleshly men, as Saint Austen witnesseth. We see (saith he)

Gregory.

August de conflictu virtutis & viciorum.

Bartholde proprietatib.

Augustinus. he) that rauenous fishes haue some measure, for when they hunger, they do rape and eat, but when they be ful, they spare: Only a couetous man may not be filled, or satisfied, euer he taketh, and neuer hath he enough: neither dreadeth he God, nor shame of man, neither spareth Father, neither knoweth Mother: with his brother he accordeth not, nor with his friend keepeth truth. He oppresseth widdowes, and harmeth motherlesse children. Free men he maketh bond, and bringeth forth false witnesse. He occupieth dead mens goods, as though he should neuer dye.

Augustinus. What madnesse is this, saith this Doctour, thus to lose life and grace, and procure the soules damnation? To winne Gold, and lose Heauen? And therefore

Psalm. 54. saieth the Prophet: Unhappinesse shall compasse thee round about, trauaile and vnrighteousnesse is in the middest among them. Also, Innocentius speaking of the

Innocentius. harme that commeth of couetousnesse, saith: O, how many men hath couetousnesse deceiued and spilt? For couetousnes or reward of gifts that the King Balaak

Numb. 22 promised Balaam, hee would haue cursed the people of God, notwithstanding his owne

owne Alle reproued him in his own conscience, & all that was in him reproued, and hurt his fote at a wall. And yet was he ouercome and ledde away with couetousnesse, which enforced him what hée might. Achan was stoned, for couetous- Iosh. 7.
nesse made him steale gold and precious cloathes, against Gods commandement. Gehesie was stricken with misery, for that he solde Naamans health, that came 2. Reg 5.
by the grace of God. Iudas for couetousnesse solde Christ, and afterward hanged himselfe. Ananias and Sapphira his wife, did die suddenly, because they denied to Acts 5.
Peter the price or summe of money that they receiued. Couetousnesse is cause that rich men eate poore men, euen as Beasts eate grasse, keeping it vnder: this is daily séene. For if a rich man haue a field, and in the midst, or on the outside, a poore man haue but one Aker: or if a rich man haue a whole street, saue one house that some poore brother of his oweth, he neuer ceasseth till that hée hath gotten it out of the poore mans hand, eyther by prayng, or by buying, or by purchasing by deceit. Thus fared it by King Achab, that by the procurement of the false Quéene Iezebel,

slew the poore man Naboth, for that hée would not sell him his Vineyard lying by his Pallace. Whereupon saith S. Ambrose: How far will you rich men stretch out your couetousnesse? Will ye dwel alone vpon the earth, and haue no poore men with you? Why put you out your fellow in kinde, & challenge to your selfe the possession, that kinde and nature hath made common to all men, both poore and rich? The earth was made common, and will yee rich men challenge proper right therein? Nature and kinde knoweth no riches, for she bringeth forth all manner of men poore. For we be not gotten with rich cloathes, nor borne with Gold and Siluer. Nature and kinde bringeth vs naked into the world, both néedy of meat and drinke. Naked the earth taketh vs againe, as naked euen as she brought vs hither. She cannot close our possessions and riches with vs in the Sepulcher. For kinde maketh no difference betweene poore and rich, neither in comming hither, nor in going hence; all after one manner she bringeth forth, all after one manner closeth she in the graue.

Ambros. de suo libello de Naboth.

Whosoeuer maketh difference betwéen

poore

poore and rich, abide till they haue lien a little space in the graue, and then open and loke among the dead bones, who was rich, and who was poore. Except it be as thus, that moe cloathes bee rotten with the rich men, then with the poore. And that endammageth them that be aliue, and profiteth not them that be dead. Thus saith the holy Doctour, of such extortioners it is written: Other mens fields they reape, and of the Vine of him that hath beene oppressed, they plucke away the grapes. They leaue men naked, and plucke away their cloathes, that they haue not wherewith to couer them from cold. And they lift vp this Pot (that I spake of before) betweene heauen & earth: for couetousnesse of men, neither hath Charity in earth to their brethren, nor to God in heauen, and they beare this Pot into the Land of Shinar, that is to say, Into the Land of stench, that is, hell. For there is stinke, in stead of sweet smelling, as Esay saieth. Beware that thou goe not with this Pot, nor with the woman therein, and in any case take heede that thou marry not with her, for then yee must be both one. That is that lustfull Iob 24.

woman and full of fleshly delights, with whom Kings and Merchants haue done folly here in earth, and with her vices they haue bene made rich: whose damnation is written in the booke of the Reuelation of S. Iohn, by these words; In one day shall all her plagues come vpon her, death, sorrow, and hunger, and fire shall burne her. For strong is God that will auenge him on her. The Kings of the earth that haue committed adultery with her, and haue liued in her delights, when they shall see the smoake of her burning, shall stand afarre off weeping and wayling, yea crying alas, alas, that great City, that was cloathed with bisse, purple and brasell, and ouer-gilt with gold and precious Stones and Pearle, for in one houre all these great riches shall bee destroyed. Then shall they say that shall bee damned with her: We haue erred from the way of truth and righteousnesse, and the light hath not shined vppon vs, and the Sunne of vnderstanding hath not risen to vs: we haue beene wearied in the way of wickednes and of lusts, and haue gone the hard waies, but the way of God we knew not. What hath pride profited

vs,

vs, or the boast of our riches? What hath it brought vnto vs? All is gone as a shadow of death, and we can shew no manner of holinesse in our kindred. In our wickednes we be wasted away. Thinke therefore I counsell thee, that thou shalt giue a reckoning of thy Baylywicke.

Heere should be asked, how thou hast gouerned thy Wife, thy Children & Seruants? Hast thou brought them vp after the Lawes of GOD, and continued them therein, as much as lyeth in thy power? But if thou hast brought them vp after another way, or suffered them to goe at their owne will, thinke not but thou must giue account thereof, when it shall be said: Giue account of thy Baylywicke. But and if thou wilt auoide all the streight and hard accounts, I counsell thee, whatsoeuer thou be, to fall and cleaue vnto the mercy and goodnesse of GOD, through Christs merits, with a liuely faith and repenting heart for thine iniquities. And now therefore, repent of thy life past, and amend, for if thou doe not, and that in time, who shall grant thee pardon and release of thy accounts?

¶ The second part of this Sermon.

IN this second part, with the helpe of God, I will shew first, who shall call vs to this reckoning. Secondly, before who̅ we shall reckon. And finally, what punnishment shall bee to them that bee found false seruants and wicked, and what reward shall be giuen to them that be found faithfull and true. For the first ye shall know, that there be two iudgements: the first, anon after the departing of the body and soule, which is a particular dome, whereof Luke speaketh in his Gospel. The second dome shall bee anon after the generall resurrection, and that shall be vniuersall, and of this speaketh S. Matthew. To the first shall euery man be called, one after another, as the world passeth. To the second, shall we come all together in the twinckling of an eye. To the first men shall be called by three Somners or Seriants, the first is sickneſſe, the second, age, the third, death. The first warneth, the second threatneth, and the third taketh. This is a kindly order, but sometime it falleth vnkindly. For some die, that neuer

Math 25.

uer consider what is sickneſſe, nor age, as Childzen that be suddenly slaine. And some, yea, and the most part now adayes that die, depart before their pure and naturall age of death. Therefore I say, that the first that called vs vnto this speciall iudgement, is sickneſſe, that followeth all mankinde, so that euery man hath it. And there is a double sickneſſe that some men haue, but not all, yet the first sickeneſſe is double, for some is within, in the midst of the soule, and some is without, in the feebleneſſe of the body, that needes must be destroied, who in continuance of time, himselfe is cause of corruption, as the Philosophers saieth, that there is feebleneſſe in sicknesſe. Now may a man see hereby, that though a man shut out of his house (that is, his heart) all manner of worldly and fleshly thoughts, yet for all that euer he can do, he shall scantly suffer to thinke onely on GOD, the space of a Pater noster while, but some other thought of things that be passing, entreth into the soule, and draweth her from the contemplation. But O good GOD, what a sickneſſe is this, & heauy burthen vpon the sounes of Adam? That on the *Notetur.*

soule mucke of the world, we can thinke long enough; but on the Lord whom the Soule should haue most delectation by, we cannot thinke so little a space, but that the Cockle will enter among the Wheat. Of this sickenesse spake Saint Paul, when he saide: I see another law in my members, rebelling against the Law of my spirit, and drawing me to the Law of sinne. So that it fareth by vs, as it doth by a man that would loke stedfastly against the Sunne, & cannot endure long for any thing, and yet for no default that is in the Sunne, for it is most cleare in it selfe, and so by reason should be best seene; but it is for the feblenesse of mens eyes. Right so, sithence Adam our first Father was put out of Paradise, all his off spring haue beene thus sicke, as the Prophet saith: Our Fathers haue eaten a bitter Grape, and the teeth of their children be set on edge. The second sickenesse, that is common to all mankinde, commeth of feblenesse of body, as hunger, thirst, cold, heate, sorrow, wearinesse, & many other, as Iob saieth, A man that is borne of a Woman, liuing a little time, is filled with many miseries. But there be other

Genesis 3.

Ezek. 18.

Iob 14.

sicke-

ſickneſſes that come to ſome, but not to all, as Leproſſe, Palſie, Feuers, Dropſies, blindneſſe, and many other, as it is ſaide to the people of Iſrael in Scripture: but if thou kepe not the Commandements that be written in the booke of life, I ſhall increaſe thy ſorrowes, and the ſickneſſe of thy ſeed, great ſickneſſe and long abiding. And ye ſhall vnderſtand, that God ſendeth ſuch ſickneſſe otherwhile to good men, and ſometimes to euill. To good men, God doth it for two cauſes, and that I ſay of ſickneſſe, I would to bee vnderſtood of all manner of tribulation. The firſt cauſe, for that they ſhould euer know that they haue no perfection of themſelues, but of God onely, and to encreaſe meekeneſſe. Of this ſaith Paul: Leſt the greatneſſe of reuelation lift or extoll mee vp into pride, to me was giuen the pricke of my fleſh, the angell of Sathanas, to ſmite me on the necke, whereof I haue thrice prayed God, that it ſhould goe from me. And he anſwered me, My grace is ſufficient. For my vertue is fulfilled in ſickneſſe, whereof thus ſaith the gloſe: The Fiend aſking Iob to bee tempted, was heard, and not the Apoſtle, aſking his temp-

temptations to be remoued: God heard him that should be damned, and hee heard not him that he would saue. For oft the sicke man asketh many thinges of the Leach that he will not giue him, and that is, for to make him whole of sickenesse. Also GOD sendeth Saints oftentimes sickenesse and persecution, to giue vs sinfull wretches example of patience. For if he should suffer his Saints to haue tribulation in this world, and they thanke him therefore: much more we wretches, that God hath sent to, not a hundred part of their sorrow, should beare it merkely, since wee haue deserued a thousand times so much as they haue. Wherefore as we reade of Toby, that on a day as he was
Tob.2. weary of burying of poore men, the which should else haue beene vnburied, and haue beene eaten of Hounds and Fowles, as ỹ carkasses of other vnreasonable beasts: as he for wearinesse was laid to rest (thorough the sufferance of God) the Swallowes that bred aboue in the house, made ordure which fell on his eyes, whereby he waxed blinde. This is written, that God suffered this temptation to come to him for an example of patience, to al them

that

that came after. And so was all the temptation of holy Iob. And though Toby frō his childhood euermore did feare God, and kept his Commandements, yet was hee not agreeued against God, though that mischieuous blindnesse fell to him, but vnmoueably dwelt in the feare of God, thanking him al the daies of his life. Loe, heere the Scripture expressely saith, that God suffered this holy man to haue that sickenesse, to giue other that come after him, an example of patience. And also sometime God sendeth sickenesse and tribulation to wicked men, and that for two causes. First, for that they should dread God, and leaue their sinne, as it is written: Their sickenesse was multiplied, and after they hasted to Godward. For we see often, men in sickenesse know their God, that neuer would haue turned vnto him while they were whole. Also God sendeth them sickenesse often, to agast other men, lest they should follow their sinne. As the sickenesse of King Antiochus, whom God smote with such a plague, that the worms crawled out of his body, he being aliue. And the stinke was so loathsome, that his friends were weary therwith, and might

Antiochus.

not

not suffer it: yea, at length hee might not abide his owne stinke, and then he began to know himselfe, & said: It is righteous to be subiect vnto God, and a mortall man not to hold him equall with GOD. And the Story saith, He asked mercy of God, and made a vow vnto him that hee would make the City of Ierusalem free, and the Iewes as free as the men of Athens, and that he would honour Gods Temple with precious aray, and multiply the holy vessels, and finde of his owne lands the charges and expences pertaining to the Sacrifice, and that he would become a Iew, and go ouer all the Land, preaching Gods Law. And yet God gaue him no mercy as he desired, for neyther was there in him contrition nor repentance that sprung of faith, but of odious paine. For what was in him to forsake his wickednesse, when he was vnable to doe good or euill? And by this vengeance that God toke on this King, men may see what it is to bee disobedient to GOD. Also it is to be taken heed, that when sickenesse commeth, euer it sheweth that the party is mortall, and that he shall needs dye at last, though he may escape this sickenesse

nesse, yet cannot he eschue death, and so he must needs come to the reckoning.

The second Somner. Properties of death.

The second Somner that shall call to this peculiar iudgement, is age and feeblenesse, whose property is, although he tarry with thee, he will not leaue thee, vntill he hath brought thee to the third, that is, Death. But there be many, though they haue this Somner with them, yet they take no heede. He seeth how his head boreth, his backe croketh, his breath stinketh, his teeth falleth, his sight failes, his face riuelled, his eares waxe heauy to heare: what meaneth all this, but that age somneth thee to the dome? But what more madnesse can be, then a man being called and drawne to so dreadfull a reckoning, where except he answer well, he forfeiteth both body and soule to damnation for euer, if hee see a little mirth by the way, hee thinketh so much thereon, that he forgetteth who draweth him? So doth he that is striken in age, who hath so great pleasure in this worlds wealth, that he forgetteth whither hee is going: Therefore saith a holy Doctour, that amongst all the abuses of the world, most is of an old man that is obstinate, for hee thinketh

thinketh not of his going out of this world, nor of his passing into the world to come. He heareth three messengers of death, but he beleeued them not, and the cause is, for the threefold cord that such an old man is bound with, is hard to breake. This corde is custome, that is of three plies, which be these idle thoughts, vnhonest speech, and wicked deeds. The which, if they grow in a man from his childhood vnto mans age, they make a threefold cord to binde the old man in custome of sinne. Therefore saith Esay, breake the bonds of sinne. Thinke therefore, whosoeuer thou bee, that art thus summoned, thou canst not escape, but that thou must make thy reckoning.

Esay 58.

The third Somner. *Visitatio mortis.*

The third Somner to this reckoning, is Death, and his condition is this, come he first, or come he last, he spareth neither poore nor rich, aged nor young, nor he feareth no threatning, he regardeth no prayer nor gift, nor granteth any respite, but without delay he bringeth forth man to iudgement. Therefore saith S. Austen, well ought euery man to dread the day of death. For in what state soeuer mans last day findeth him, when he goeth out

Augustinus.

of

of this world, in the same state it bringeth him to his iudgement. Therefore saith the wise man: Sonne, thinke on thy last day, and thou shalt neuer sinne. Now remember that thou shalt reckon for thy Bayliwicke.

I say also that there shall bee another day of iudgement, to the which all men shall come together in the twinkling of an eye, and this shall be vniuersall. And like as to the other, euery man shall be called by these three Somners, so to this iudgement all the world shall bee called, with three generall Somners: & right as the other three messengers shew a mans end, so do these messengers tell the end of the world. The first is ỹ worlds sicknes, the second is the age & feeblenesse, and the third is his end. The sicknes of the world thou shalt know by charity waxing colde, and his age & feeblenes thou shalt know by tokens fulfilled, and his end thou shalt know by Antichrists pursuing. First, I said, Thou shalt know the worlds sickenesse, by charity waxing colde. Clearkes that do write on naturall things, say that the body is sicke, when that his kindly heat is to little, or when it is to much.

The day of Iudgement.

To know the worlds sickenesse.

Then

Then sithence vnderstand as thus, that al men are as one body, whose kindly and naturall heate is charity, that is, loue to God, and loue to thy neighbour; vnnaturall or vnkindly heate, is lustfull loue to other creatures. When therefore thou seest that the loue of men to Godward, and to their neighbours, is colde, little, and faint, and the loue of worldly things and lusts of the flesh is great and feruent, then know thou well that vnkindly heat is to great, and kindly heate is to little. That this is a knowledge of this sickenesse, I may proue by Christs authority, for he himselfe gaue this as a signe, drawing to the end of the world, for that wickednesse shall be plentious, charity shall ware colde. Therefore when thou seest Charity thus little set by of the world, and wickednesse increase, because that worldly things bee most set by and loued: know well that the world and his wealth passeth, and that this Somner is come. And thus saith Saint Paul: Wot thou well, that in the last dayes, shall come perillous times, & there shall be men louing themselues, that is to say, their bodies, and all things belonging thereto;

Matth. 24.

2 Tim. 3.

couetousnes borne vp with pride: disobedient to Father or Mother, fellowes without affection, without peace, blamers, incontinent, vnmilde, without benignity, traitors, rebels, swelling, louers of lusts more then of God, hauing a likenesse of piety, more then the vertue thereof, and these flee thou. When thou seest the people of such fashion, know thou wel that the first Sommer warneth all the world, that the day of reckoning draweth toward.

The second Sommer that shall warne all the world, is the age of the world, and his feeblenes, & sheweth tokens fulfilled: but I know well that we bee not sufficient to know the times that the Father hath put in his owne power, to shew certainly the day, the yeere, or the howre of iudgement. This knowledge was hid from the very Apostles of Christ, and also from Christs manhood, as to shew it to vs. Neuertheless, we may by authority of Scriptures, with reasons and expositions of holy men, well and openly shew that this day of wrath is nigh. Lest any man say in his heart, as it is written of the folish Bayliffe, that saith: My Lord Luke 12.

doth tarry to come to iudgement, & vpon hope thereof he taketh vpon him to beate his fellow seruants, and to eate & drinke, and be drunken: I shal shew you that this day is at hand, but how nigh I cannot say, nor will not. For if Paul said, a thousand three hundred yeare and more past, wee bee those on whom the endes of the world be come: much more may wee say the same, that be so much nearer the ende then he was. Also, S. Chrysostome saith: Thou seest darknes ouer all, and why doubtest thou that the day is at an ende? First, on the valley is darkneſſe, when the day draweth downeward. When therefore thou seest the valleyes darke, why doubtest thou whether it bee neere night or no? But if thou see the Sun so low that darknes be vpon the hils, thou wilt say doubtles that it is night. Right so, if thou see in the secular men, that darkneſſe of sinne beginneth to haue the maſtery, it is a token that the world endeth. But when thou seest Priests that be put in the top of soueraigncy of spirituall dignity, that should bee as hilles among the common people in perfect liuing, ỹ darkneſſe of sinne hath got the vpper hand of them,

1 Cor. 10.

Chrysostome.

A proper similitude.

them, who doubteth but that the worlde is at an ende? Also, Abbot Ioachim in the exposition of Ieremy, saith: That tō the yeere of our Lord, 1300, all times be suspected to me; and we be past this suspect time, nigh 200. yeares. And Maid Ilde- gar, in the booke of her Prophesies, in the third part, the tenth vision, & 7. Chap. moueth this reason. Right as in 7. daies God made the worlde, so in 7. thousand yeares the worlde shall passe: & as in the first day man was made and formed, so in 6000. yéres he was brought againe and reformed: and as in the 7. day the worlde was fully made, and God rested from his working, so in the seuen thousandth yére, the number of them that shall be saued, shall be fulfilled, and then shall the Saintes wholly rest in body and soule. If then it be so as this Maiden saieth, that 7000. yéres in passing of the worlde, accord to the seuen dayes in making of it, let vs sée what it wanteth that these seuen M. yéres be not fulfilled. For if we ioyne the yéres from the Nativity of Christ, to the yéres from the beginning of the worlde, following the minde of Austen, Bede, Origine, & the perfectest Doctours

Ioachim.

Maide Ildegar.

Augustine.

treating on this matter: it is passed now almost fiue thousand and fiue hundred yeares, as it is open in a booke called Speculum iudiciale: So it followeth, that this last day is more then halfe gone, if we shall giue credence to this Maidens reason. But if we leane to the Gospel of
Matth. 24. Matthew, we shall finde that the Disciples of Christ asked three Questions. First, what time the City of Jerusalem should be destroyed. The second, what tokens were of his comming to iudgement: and the third, what signe should be of the end of the world. And Christ gaue no certaine time of these thinges when they should fall, but he gaue them tokens, by the which they might know when they drawe neere. To the first question, of the destruction of Jerusalem, he saide:
Note. When the Romanes come to besiege the City, then soone after it shall be destroyed. And as to the second and third, he gaue them many things, as were these: That Realme shall rise against Realme, and people against people, and that there should be pestilence and earthquakes, the which we haue seene in our dayes. But the last token that he gaue, was this:

When

When ye see the abhomination of desolation, spoken of by Daniel, standing in the Sanctuary, then who so readeth, let him vnderstand. Vpon which text, argueth a Doctor, in a booke that hee maketh of the end of the world. If the words of Daniel haue authority (as God saieth they haue) then it sufficeth to number the yéeres of the world, to take that Daniel hath written. Now Daniel in the twelfe chapter, speaking of this abhomination, signifieth by the cealling of the holinesse of the Iewes, the which fell by Titus and Vespasian, Ierusalem was destroyed, and the people of the Iewes were dispersed in all the world. And this abhomination, as Doctors say, shall be in the great Antichrists times, a thousand, two hundred and ninety dayes. Now proueth this Doctor, that a day must bee taken for a yéere, both by authority of Scripture in the same place, and in other, & also by reason. And so it is thought to this Clearke, that the greatest member of Antichrist shall come and appeare more in the fourteenth hundreth yéere from the birth of Christ, then any time else before, which number of yéers is now fulfilled, not fully Daniel 12.

twelue yeares wanting. And this reason put not I as to shew any certaine time of his coming, saying I haue not the knowledge, but to shew that he is nigh, but how nigh I know not. But take we hed to the fourth part of the second vision of S. Iohn in the booke of Reuelations, in the which vnder the opening of 7. Seales is declared the state of the Church from the time of Christ, to the end of ỹ world. The opening of the foure first Seales, shew the estate of the Church from the time of Christ, to the time of Antichrists appearing, and his foregoers, the which is shewed in the opening of ỹ other three Seales. The opening of the first Seale, telleth the state of the Church in the time of the preaching of Christ & his Apostles. For then the first beast that was a lyon, gaue his voyce, that betokened the preachers of Christs Resurrection, and his Ascention. For then went out a white horse, and he that sate vpon him had a bowe in his hand, & he went forth ouercomming to ouercome. By this white Horse we vnderstand the cleane life and conuersation that those Preachers had, & by their bowe their true preaching, pricking forrow

Apoc. 6.

The first Seale.

Exposition.

tow or repentance in mens hearts for their sinnes without flattering. They went out of Jewry that they came off, winning and ouercomming some of the Jewes, and made them to leaue the trust that they had in the old Law, and to beleeue in Jesus Christ, and to follow his teaching: and they went out to ouercome the Painimn, shewing to them ỳ their Images were nó Gods, but mans worke, vnmighty to saue themselues, or any other; drawing them to the beléefe of Jesus Christ, God and man. In opening of the second Seale, there cryed a Calfe, which was a beast wont to be slaine and offered to God in the old law. This sheweth the state of the Church in the time of Martyrs, that for their stedfast preaching of Gods true word shed their blood; and that is betokened by the red horse that went out at the opening of this seale, and this estate began at Nero the cursed Emperor, & endured to the time of Constantine the Great, that endowed the Church. For in this time many of Christs seruants, & namely, the leaders of Christs flocke were slaine, and of xxvii. Bishops of Rome, that were betweene

The second Seale.

Exposition.

Nero Constant. Magnus.

Peter and Siluester, the first, I reade but of foure, but that they were Martyrs for the Law of Christ. And also in the time of Diocleſian the Emperor, the perſecution of Christian men was ſo great, that in thirty dayes were ſlaine twenty two thouſand men & women in diuers countries, for the law of God. The opening of the third Seale, telleth the ſtate of the Church in the time of Heretikes, that is figured by the blacke Horſe, for falſe vnderſtanding of Scripture: For then cryed the third Beaſt, that is a Man, (for at that time was it needfull for to preach the myſtery of Christs Incarnation and Paſſion, againſt the Heretikes that take amiſſe theſe points) how Christ toke very mankinde of Mary, he being God as he was before, and his Mother beeing Maid before and after. The opening of the fourth Seale, telleth the ſtate of the Church in the time of Hypocrites, that betokened by the pale Horſe, that ỹ ſigne of penance without faith, doth blinde the people; and he that ſate vpon this horſe, his name was Death: for they ſlay ghoſtly them that they leade and teach to God by other wayes then by Christ; and hell follow-

The third Seale.

Expoſition.

The fourth Seale.

Expoſition

followeth them, for hell receiueth those that these men deceiue. At that time shall it be nede, that the fourth beast, that is, the Eagle, flying highest of al Fowles, make his cry to raise vp the Gospel, & to praise Gods law aboue all other, lest mens wits and their traditions tread downe & ouergrow the Law of God, by the falshod of these hypocrites. And that is the last estate that is, or shall be in the Church, before the comming of the great Antichrist.

The opening of the fift Seale, sheweth the state of the Church that then shal follow, and the desires that the followers of Gods law shall haue, after the end of this world to be deliuered of this woe. The opening of the firt Seale, telleth the state of the Church in Antichrists time, which estate ye may know to be, when it is fulfilled that S. Iohn prophesied to fall in the opening of this Seale where he saith: After this I saw foure Angels standing vpon the 4. corners of the earth, holding the foure windes that they blow not vpon the Earth, vppon the Sea, nor vpon the trees. The foure Angels be the number of al the diuels ministers, that in those daies to doe their masters pleasure, shall stoppe the

The 5. Seal.

The 6. Seal.

Note.

the foure winds (which be the foure Gospels) to be preached, & shall let the breath of the holy Ghost to fall vpon men, that they might mourne for their sinne to amend their life; and also vpon them that would increase in vertue, and vpon perfect men. What after this is to come? But that the mystery of the seuenth seale be shewed, that he come in his owne person, whom Iesus Christ shall slay with the breath of his mouth, when the Fiend shall shew the vttermost persecution that he and his seruants can do to Christs subiects: and that shall be the third warning that the world shall haue to come to this iudgement. In all this matter I haue said nothing of my selfe, but of other Doctors that be approued.

The seuēth Seale.

I said also in my second principall part, that it was to bee knowne before what Iudge we must reckon, that is, God himselfe, he that seeth all our deedes, and all our thoughts, from the beginning of our life to the end, and he shall shew there the hid things of our hearts, opening to al the world the righteousnes of his iudgment, so that by the power of God euery mans deeds shal be shewed to all the world. And

so

so it seemeth by the words of S. Iohn in the Apocalyps, where he did see dead men great & little, standing in the presence of the throne. And bookes were opened, and another booke was opened, that was of life, and dead men were iudged after the things that were written in these bookes, after their owne doings. These bookes be mens consciences that now bee closed, but then shal be opened to al the world to reade therein, both their deeds & thoughts. And the booke of life, is Christs liuing & Doctrine, that is hidde now to them that shall be damned through their owne malice, that counsell men to follow the world, rather then GOD. In the first booke shall be written all that wee haue done, in the other all that we should haue done. And then shall dead men be iudged after those things that be written in the bookes. And if the deeds that we haue done, that bee written in the Bookes of our consciences, be according to the booke of Christs teaching and liuing, the which is the booke of life, we shalbe surely saued, or else we shall be damned; for the iudgements shall bee giuen after our workes. Loke therefore now what is written in the

Apoc. 20.

Exposition.

the booke of thy Conscience while thou art heere, and if thou finde any thing contrary to Christs life and teaching, scrape it out with the knife of repentance, and write it better, euermore thinking that thou shalt giue a reckoning of thy Bayliwicke.

Also I said principally, that it were good to know what reward shall then be giuen to the wise seruants and good, and what to false and wicked seruants, wherupon it is written that the Lord Iesus Christ shall come to iudgement heere into this world, in the same body that he tooke of Mary the Virgin, hauing thereon the wounds that he suffered for our redemption. And all that euer shall bee saued, taking againe their bodies, cleaning to their head Christ, shall be caught vp, meeting him in the ayre (as Saint Paul saith:) and they that shall be damned, lying vpon the earth, as in a Tunne of wine, the dregges being beneath, and the cleare wine standing aboue. Then shall Christ aske account of the deeds of mercy, reprouing false Christian men, for leauing them vndone; rehearsing the same, and other paines that his true Seruants

Note.

uants haue ſuffered in following him. Then ſhall thoſe falſe ſeruants goe with the diuell whom they haue ſerued in the earth, ſwallowing them into the endleſſe fire: but the righteous men ſhall goe into euerlaſting life. Then ſhall be fulfilled that ỹ is written in the bok of myſteries: Woe, woe, woe, ſhall bee vnto them that dwell on the earth; woe to the Painim, that gaue that worſhip to dead Images, wrought with mans hand, and to other creatures, that he ſhould haue giuen vnto God that made him. Woe to the Iew that truſteth ſo much in the olde Law; then ſhall he ſée the Son of Mary iudging the world, whom he deſpiſed and crucified. Woe to the falſe Chriſtian man that knew the wil of God, and fulfilled it not. Alſo woe ſhall be to the ſinne of thought to thée, that haſt ſhut out of thy heart the feare of God, that is, mind of his paſſion, holy contemplation of his godneſſe, and memory of his benefits, and thanks therfore: And haſt alſo excluded mékeneſſe, pitty, gentleneſſe, &c. and haſt made thy heart a houſe for Swine and a denne of Théeues, by vncleane thoughts and delights. As thou héere haſt ſhut God out

of

out of thy heart, so shall he shut thée out of heauen. Thou hast harboured the company of the Fiend, and therefore with him in hell thou shalt euer abide. Woe also shalbe for thy sin of speech, for that thou couldst not open thy mouth for foule and stinking sin to praise God in the fellowship of Saints. Thou hast vsed thy speech vnhonestly, with cursing, fraud, deceit, lying, forswearing, scorning, & backbiting. For comely praising is not in the mouth of sinners, in which if thou hadst kept thy mouth cleane, thou shouldst haue sung in heauen, in the fellowship of Angels, this blessed song: Sanctus, sanctus, sanctus, Dominus Deus omnipotens, that is, Holy, holy, holy, art thou Lord God Almighty. Now crying and weeping, thou shalt in the company of diuels cry, Væ, væ, quantæ sunt tenebræ, that is, Woe, woe, how great is this darknesse? Woe also shall be for the sinne of workes: thou hast béene proud, thy pride as Esay saith, shall be drawne with thée into hell. Thou hast béene brent with enuy; of the diuell enuy entred into the world, & they shall follow him that be on his side, as Salomon saith. Or thou hast béene stirred

with

with wrath, and euery man that beareth wrath to his brother, is guilty of iudgement, as Christ saith in the Gospel of S. Matthew. Or thou hast bene slow to good bedes, and therefore diseases shall come to thee as to a wayfaring man, & thy power shall be as an vnarmed man, saieth the Booke of Prouerbes. Or if thou hast bene an adulterer, a glutton, or a couetous man, know saith Paul, That neither adulterer, nor vncleane person, that is, a glutton, or a couetous person, shall euer haue entrance into the kingdome of heauen; but fire and brimstone, and the spirit of tempests, that is, the Fiend of hell, shall be part of their paine, as it is written in the Psalter. When these damned men be in this woe, they shall sing this rufull song, written in the booke of mourning: The ioy of our hearts is gone, our mirth is turned to woe and sorrow, the crownes of our heads are fallen from vs, Alas for the sinnes that wee haue done. But ioy, ioy, and ioy, shall bee vnto them that be saued: Ioy in God, ioy among themselues, and ioy in other that bee saued, then are they happy. Oh how happy are they, for that their trauailes bee finished

Matth. 5.

Prou. 6.

Paulus.

Note.

Conclusion

A Godly and famous Sermon,

shed through Christ which brought them to so gracious an ende. Then they are happy, for that they are escaped the perils of the world, and the paine of hell. But happy are they for the endles blisse that they haue in the sight of God. Cui sit honor & gloria in secula seculorum. Amen.

FINIS.